

**State Planning Office
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
Week ending January 11, 2008**

State law assigns four core duties to the State Planning Office that include: 1) conducting continuing economic analysis, including economic forecasting, 2) coordinating the development of the State's economy and energy resources with the conservation of its natural resources; 3) providing technical assistance to towns and regions; and 4) providing technical assistance to the Governor and Legislature by undertaking special studies and plans and preparing policy alternatives.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Jan 15 **Land for Maine's Future Board Meeting**
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Pine Tree State Arboretum, Augusta
CONTACT: Aline Lachance at 287-1485 or aline.lachance@maine.gov
- Jan 15 **The Governor's Council on Maine's Quality of Place**
1:30 pm - 5:00 pm - PUC Board Room, 242 State Street, Augusta
CONTACT: Linda LaPlante at 287-6077 or Linda.c.laplante@maine.gov
- Jan 16 **Resolve 46 Building Code Committee Meeting**
9:30 am - 12:00 pm - Maine State Planning Office, 184 State Street, Augusta
CONTACT: Amy Cole-Ives at 287-8052 or amy.cole-ives@maine.gov

DIRECTOR'S POLICY AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

Governor's Quality of Place to discuss workforce issues. The next meeting of the Governor's Council on Maine's Quality of Place will be on Tuesday, January 15, 1-5 p.m. in the Public Utilities Commission Hearing Room at 242 State Street, Augusta. The Council is meeting with Chancellor Pattenau, President Fitzsimmons, and Commissioner Fortman to discuss the workforce development issues addressed in the Council's report. **CONTACT: Sue Inches at 287-2989 or sue.inches@maine.gov**

MAINE COASTAL PROGRAM

Maine Clean Marinas and Boatyards program funded for 2008 Season. With the loss of federal funding for the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Program, MCP staff has been scrambling to find financial support for important existing pollution prevention and remediation programs. We are happy to announce that the Maine Department of Environmental Protection has awarded us funding for the Maine Clean Marinas and Boatyards Program for 2008.

Participation in the 'above compliance' Maine Clean Boatyards & Marinas Program is voluntary; and participating facilities sign a pledge, complete a self-assessment, work with assistance



providers to make needed improvements. They then invite a verification team to inspect the facility. The program is implemented by the Maine Marine Trade Association and state agency partners. Maine's congressional delegation is trying to restore funding at the national level for the Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution program. **CONTACT: Paula Thomson at 287-1482 or paula.thomson@maine.gov**

LAND USE PLANNING PROGRAM

Augusta's comprehensive plan found consistent. SPO has found the city of Augusta's comprehensive plan consistent with the Growth Management Act. **CONTACT: John Weber, 287-4818 or john.weber@maine.gov**

New software helps planners. Several members of the State Planning Office will be joining volunteers from the Town of Brunswick to create three dimensional virtual models of 100 buildings in the village center. On January 7, SPO employees attended training on the use of the free architectural software 'Sketchup,' along with members of the Brunswick planning staff, planning board, village review board, and public works department, as well as architects from the area. The one-day training session prepared the group to create models that will potentially be used by municipal staff and boards in a variety of ways. In addition, these buildings will be added to Google Earth's 3D buildings layer, allowing virtual tourists to gain a sense of the built environment in Brunswick. **CONTACT: Patrick Wright at 287-1491 or Patrick.wright@maine.gov**

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Nominations sought for 2008 Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. For the past 21 years, the Governor's Volunteer Service Awards have celebrated and recognized the exemplary work of Maine's most dedicated citizens. This award program, administered jointly by the Maine Commission for Community Service and the Governor's Office, recognizes and honors the valuable contributions of Maine's extraordinary volunteers while inspiring others to follow their example. Citizens, nonprofits, government volunteer programs, educational institutions, and businesses are invited to submit nominees for the 2008 awards. Nominations must be received by February 29, 2008. Information about eligibility, nomination forms, and guidelines on preparing nomination forms for all categories are available at www.volunteermaine.org/gsa/. Award presentations will be made in the Hall of Flags at the State House during National Volunteer Week (April 27 – May 3). **CONTACT: Maryalice Crofton at 287-8931 or service.commission@maine.gov**

Martin Luther King Day service project: *Maine Letters from Kids*. The Maine Commission for Community Service, Maine Conservation Corps, and the VolunteerMaine VISTA Project have partnered to create a Martin Luther King Day service project that aims to honor Dr. King's life and legacy. The goal is to supply letters from Maine students in 4th through 7th grades to students in Iraq as a means of building peaceful bridges between our cultures for the future. The project is looking for students to write letters to Iraqi children about hobbies, school activities,

sports, family, or home life. This is an opportunity for Maine students to study, discuss, or reflect upon the principles of nonviolent action as a strategy for bringing about a stronger global or local community. Letter-writing can be done in as little as one class period, and is applicable to the Maine State Learning Results for language arts and civic engagement. The project partners will collect the letters and facilitate the transportation to Iraq, the translation of the letters, and the delivery of the letters along with previously donated school supplies to Iraqi schoolchildren. For more information: [Details and Guidelines](#). **CONTACT: Christy Monroe at 287-1588 or christy.monroe@maine.gov**

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating fuel prices rise again. The Office of Energy Independence and Security January 7, 2008, survey of home heating oil prices found the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be up by \$.07 since the last survey at \$3.35 per gallon and \$1.09 higher than last year at this time. The statewide kerosene price average is up by \$0.08 since last week at \$3.75 per gallon and \$1.09 higher than last year at this time. This week's propane price survey found the statewide average to be \$2.94 per gallon which is \$0.01 lower than last week and \$0.60 higher than last year at this time.

In recent weeks the price of heating oil in Maine has been rising setting a record for the third straight week. Looking at the inventory for distillate fuels (diesel, and #2 heating oil) can partially explain the price hike. Inventories have dropped significantly, hitting near the bottom of the average range, and much of the drop in national inventories can be attributed to the east coast. It is also important to note that the wholesale price for oil has also been rising over recent weeks and that local oil dealers have not been making profits in proportion to the rise in prices. In fact many times as prices rise, their profits shrink. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@Maine.gov**